



Jeffrey L. Bleich is the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Australia.

Ambassador Bleich was nominated by President Obama, and confirmed unanimously by the Senate on November 10, 2009. He presented his credentials to the Governor General of Australia Quentin Bryce on November 26, 2009, becoming the 24th American ambassador to the Commonwealth of Australia.

Ambassador Bleich's tenure in Australia has been marked by a commitment to expanding Australia and the United States' broad alliance by promoting security, advancing free trade, promoting human rights, and expanding collaboration in education, space, energy, and technology.

Within four months of his arrival in Australia, Ambassador Bleich visited every one of Australia's states and territories, and he has maintained an active schedule, engaging Australians across all sectors of the community and advancing common goals. His efforts have included assisting victims of the 2011 Queensland floods, overseeing Australian-U.S. relief efforts to Japan, and working across a range of issues with Australia's first minority coalition government since the 1940s.

On the issue of security, Ambassador Bleich has led U.S. efforts to advance defense cooperation between the United States and Australia. These efforts include helping drive Senate ratification of the U.S.-Australia Defense Trade Cooperation Treaty, overseeing America's largest joint training exercise (Talisman Sabre) off the coast of Australia, promoting delivery of upgraded military assets to Australia Defense Forces including C-17s, F-18 Superhornets, and the MH60-Romeo, and helping to guide Australia's participation in the U.S. global force posture review, resulting in new Marine joint-training exercises in Darwin and airfield dispersals in the Northern Territory. Ambassador Bleich has worked closely with combined U.S. and Australian forces throughout the region, including traveling with the Chief of the Australian Defense Forces, General David Hurley, to support our troops in Afghanistan.

Ambassador Bleich has also focused U.S.-Australian efforts in promoting free trade throughout the region. These efforts include advancing U.S. and Australian joint participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Ambassador Bleich has also led key trade missions and hosted conferences to promote trade in a wide range of industries, including cleantech, biofuels, water-production, cloud-computing, laying trans-pacific cables, and promoting satellite technology – helping substantially increase bilateral investment and trade between the U.S. and Australia. During Ambassador Bleich's tenure, the Mission has exceeded all of its National Export Initiative (NEI) goals and was recognized in 2011 as one of the five leading NEI Missions in the world.

Ambassador Bleich has also been particularly focused on promoting scientific, environmental, and educational exchanges. Ambassador Bleich signed, with the Minister for Science and Innovation, a historic extension of Australia's and America's 60-year partnership in space tracking and exploration that included the construction of new tracking dishes, and monitoring of the Mars Space Lab program. Ambassador Bleich has championed an open internet while cracking down on cybercrime and piracy with new treaty agreements that he executed with in November 2011. The Embassy has also worked to promote improvements in energy use and conservation under his leadership, earning recognition as one of the greenest U.S. missions in the world. As Co-Chair (with the Prime Minister) of the Fulbright

Scholarship Program, Ambassador Bleich has participated in the expansion of Fulbright Scholarships to the fields of Non-Profit Management and Defense Science and Technology. In recognition of these and other efforts, Ambassador Bleich is the only U.S. Ambassador to have been invited to deliver both the John Curtin Memorial Lecture and the Robert Menzies Memorial Lecture, honoring two of Australia's most celebrated Prime Ministers.

Finally, the Embassy has developed renewed focus on issues of human rights and humanitarian support during Ambassador Bleich's tenure. The Mission is now collaborating intensively to help Australia's AusAID eliminate domestic violence in the Pacific Islands, and promote the advancement of women.

Before taking up his current post, Ambassador Bleich had a distinguished career as one of the nation's top lawyers. Immediately prior to his nomination, he served as Special Counsel to President Obama in the White House. From 1995 to 2009, Ambassador Bleich practiced law as a partner in Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP. While there, he led the firm's San Francisco office, and represented companies and individuals in the Nations' highest courts including the California and United States Supreme Courts. He also served in various leadership roles including President of the San Francisco Bar Association (2003), President of the California State Bar (2008), Chairman of the California State University Board of Trustees (2008-09), Chair of the American Bar Association's Amicus Committee (2006-2009), and Director of the White House Commission on Youth Violence (1999). Ambassador Bleich received numerous awards for his professional, community, and pro bono service, including having a day declared in his honor by the City of San Francisco.

Ambassador Bleich was born on a U.S. Army base in Germany, and grew up in Connecticut. He received his B.A. from Amherst College with high honors, his Masters in Public Policy from Harvard University with highest honors, and his law degree from the University of California at Berkeley School of Law, again with highest honors. At Berkeley, he served as Editor-in-Chief of the California Law Review, and was elected to the Order of the Coif. Following graduation from law school, he clerked for Judge Abner J. Mikva of the D.C. Circuit (1989-90), Chief Justice William Rehnquist of the United States Supreme Court (1990-91), and Judge Howard Holtzmann of the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal. He has taught courses in constitutional law and international law at the University of California at Berkeley School of Law. Ambassador Bleich is both a CORO Foundation Fellow and a John F. Kennedy Fellow. He received his certificate in Public International Law from The Hague Academy in 1993, and an Honorary Doctorate in Law from San Francisco State University (2011). He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and has served on the boards of numerous organizations.

He and his wife Rebecca have three children, Jake, Matthew and Abby.